

GRANTEE MONITORING

Grantee Name	Lakes Life Care Center, Inc.
Location/Address	840 W. Broadway Ave., Suite 100, Forest Lake, MN 55025
Date and Location of Site Visit	7/18/2017, 840 W. Broadway Ave., Suite 100, Forest Lake, MN 55025
Grantee Participants	Jill Wagner
MDH Participant(s)	Mary Ottman
Grant Agreement #/PO #	109509

PURPOSE:

In accordance with the MDH Policy 238.01 Grantee Monitoring, MDH will conduct at least one monitoring visit per grant period on all state grants of over \$50,000, and at least annual monitoring visits on grants of over \$250,000.

The purpose of the grant monitoring visit is to review and ensure progress against the grants' goals, to address any problems or issues before the end of the grant period and to build rapport between the state agency and the grantees. This visit may cover topics such as statutory compliance; challenges faced by the grantee, modifications made to the grant program, program outcomes, grantee policies and procedures, grantee governance, and training and technical assistance needs.

The findings or information obtained through this monitoring activity will be used:

- To ascertain how MDH program funds are being utilized
- To provide targeted technical assistance needs
- To improve program implementation performance
- To suggest other training needs
- In future funding decisions

OVERVIEW

1. Is the Grantee's non-profit 501(c) 3 status current? **Yes**

GRANTEE MONITORING

2. Does the Grantee have a central file containing the official records for this grant agreement and/or amendment? **Yes**
3. Where is this central file located? **In the Executive Directors office in a locked file cabinet**
4. Who is responsible for this central file? **Executive Director**
5. Does the central file include
 - The grant proposal? **yes**
 - The award letter? **yes**
 - The signed grant agreement and any/all amendments? **yes**
 - Any/all requests and/or approvals for scope/budget changes? **yes**
 - The work plan? **yes**
 - Any/all payment requests (invoices)? **yes**
 - Any/all signed subcontracts? Not applicable (**no subcontracts**) **n/a**
 - Any/all Progress Reports? **yes**

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

1. Does the organization meet all reporting requirements as outlined in the grant agreement and/or amendment? **yes**
2. Are expenditure reports submitted timely and accurately? **yes**
3. Are progress reports submitted with all required information and in a timely manner? **yes**

GRANTEE MONITORING

CONTRACTUAL

1. Does the Grantee have written policies or procedures addressing use of contractors and/or subcontractors? *N/A*
2. Were any sub-contractors paid from the MDH grant required to sign a contractual agreement outlining services to be rendered, duration of engagement, and pay rate? *N/A*
3. Was the contractual agreement(s) reviewed and approved by MDH before implementation?
N/A

PERSONNEL POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES OF THE GRANTEE

1. Are time distribution records (e.g., time-sheets) maintained to show how employees who are funded through, or contributed in kind to, the MDH grant and who work on multiple projects/programs spend their time?
Yes
2. Do personnel and/or payroll records show dates of hire/termination, immigration status if applicable, actual hours of time worked, leave time, federal and state programs worked on, and earning for all employees who are funded through, or contributed in kind, to the MDH grant? *Yes*
3. Does the Grantee have policies and procedures in writing regarding:
 - Payroll? *yes*
 - Travel? *yes*
 - Overtime? *yes*
 - Timesheets? *yes*
 - Taxes? *yes*
 - Purchasing? *yes*
 - Compensated time off? *yes*
4. Are employees time sheets approved? *yes*
By whom (what position)?

By the Executive Director and signed by staff

GRANTEE MONITORING

5. Does the Grantee's payroll preparation and distribution involve more than one employee? *Yes, executive director, board treasurer and accountant*
6. Does an authorized official approve all checks before being signed? *Yes, the board treasurer*

Additional Comments:

GRANTEE MONITORING

PROGRAMMATIC QUESTIONS

Please use this space to answer all questions.

Program History

- When was your program started? Why was it started? *This program was started in 1982 by 7 women who wanted to help pregnant women in the Forest Lake and surrounding areas.*
- What need does your program fulfill? *We provide free pregnancy related services to women and their families. Including, pregnancy testing, limited obstetrical ultrasounds, prenatal and parenting classes, dad's program, material support, community resources, STI testing and treatment*
- How has the program grown or changed since its beginning? *Yes, the program has grown from just offering pregnancy testing to the above programs.*

Grantee's Target population

- Who does the organization primarily serve? *The program mainly serves women between the ages of 18-24 who are low income and pregnant or parenting an infant.*
- What is the program's demographic and geographic coverage? *The program demographics include women between the ages of 18-24, 64% Caucasian, 6.9% Hispanic, 6.3% Asian, 2.87% African American, 16.67% unknown. 29% between 20-24, 23% 25-29, 20% 30-34, 16% 15-19. Our geographic area includes; Forest Lake, Scandia, North Branch, Chisago City, Wyoming, Center City, and St. Paul.*
- Review recent Demographic reporting.

Leadership and Governance

- Effective Board: How many board members currently serve, who are they? *We have 9 board members, including; a college founder, accountant, pastor, nurse, retiree, homemaker, event planner, medical center VP and a computer expert*
- How often do they meet? How are they informed of organization's progress and challenges? *The board meets 6 to 8 times a year and are given extensive notes on the centers progress.*
- How supportive is the Board of the program? *The board is very supportive of the program*
- How is the program staffed? Who is responsible for the supervision of grant staff?
 - How are staff evaluated on their performance? How long have PA staff been employed there? *The Executive Director is evaluated by the board president and has been employed since 2010, the Director of Client services is evaluated by the*

GRANTEE MONITORING

Executive Director and has been employed since 2013 and the volunteers are evaluated by the Director of client Services.

- How are staff background checks done? *Backgrounds are checked with reference checks and referral letters.*
- What is your organization's policy on complaints for staff and clients? *Complaints are addressed and corrective action is taken when necessary.*

Budget

- Does the current budget reflect your work plan activities? **Yes**
- Is the budget accurate for the project size/scope? **Yes**
- Do you have any challenges with the budget or invoicing? **No**
- Has your Financial Reconciliation taken place? **No**
- If you have an elevated risk designation, and/ or your Financial Reconciliation report cited any concerns, these will be discussed. **This grantee is designated as low risk.**

Review Work Plan including:

Partners

- If applicable: how are people referred to the program? Are there any barriers encountered with referral sources? What is your most common referral source? *Our most common referral source is from a friend, followed by our website. We also get referrals from WIC, public health nurses, county assistance case workers, doctor's offices and churches*
- Challenges with partners or specific counties? **None at this time**

Work Plan

- Review your 2016 – 19 grant application's description of the program you are asking to be funded. On your work plan note the services and activities you said you would provide and the number of clients you would serve.
- **Prepare a short summary of your current program(s) and the number of clients being served.** How does what you describe in the application compare with what you are currently providing? Have any programs and/or activities or services been added or removed? Have the number of clients being served per quarter decreased or increased since June 2016? Is there anything in particular you want to share about your current program to explain its current status?

GRANTEE MONITORING

We are currently providing all of the activities in our program application with the exception of one. We are not seeing any clients in our Car Seat Program as there are resources in our area that provide this, so at this time it is not a big necessity for the clients who visit our program. We have seen a steady increase in the number of clients we are seeing in our prenatal and parenting classes and in our ultrasound program, especially in the last 4 months. In the first 6 months (June 2016-Dec2017) we saw 26 ultrasound clients and 175 prenatal and parenting classes, verses, the last 6 months where we have seen 28 ultrasound clients and 201 prenatal and parenting classes. I feel like many of the outreach activities we have been doing are starting to pay off.

We are seeing a small but steady increase in the number of men attending our Dad's Program. We attribute that to making the center more inviting to men, with décor and having a male mentor on staff that can meet with them. We strongly feel that if a woman has a strong supportive partner they will be more likely to carry their child to term and be more successful as a parent.

We have always felt that meeting the needs of a pregnant mother is like a puzzle, find all of the pieces she needs to be successful and she will carry her baby to term and be a strong parent. We are constantly looking at the needs of our clients are reassessing our program goals to meet the needs of our ever changing community.

- Do you anticipate making any changes to the 2017-18 Work Plan? If so, in what way and for what reasons? *We may want to change the work plan to eliminate our car seat program as no one is using it and add a paid position of a nurse to our program.*

Participants:

- What type of outreach does the organization put into action? What is working well? What are more the challenging aspects to finding or retaining clients? *Current outreach includes; regular communication with all of the social service agencies in our area, attending local networking meetings, chamber of commerce, advertising, working with churches in the area and participating in community events. Some challenges include the need for more advertising and dispelling misconceptions about what we do at the center.*

Data:

- How is program data collected and by whom? Is data collected useful to agency? *Program data is collected by the Executive Director and the Director of Client*

GRANTEE MONITORING

Services. Data is very useful in determining which programs are used the most and are the most useful.

- Anything we can do to help or simplify data collection? *Not that I can think of.*

Review Evaluation

- Your 2015-16 Evaluation Report Summary will be discussed (If you were a past grantee).
- Your 2016-17 Evaluation Plan will be reviewed. Any suggestions provided in your 2015-16 Report Summary should be included in the plan, if you are continuing a similar evaluation. If you are planning a new evaluation, details will be discussed. Do you have any questions on your evaluation? *The current Year 1 evaluation plan has recently been submitted and includes a project evaluating healthy relationships among clients.*

Miscellaneous

- Anything else you would like to share?
- Anything else we haven't asked?

What can we do to help?

- Trainings and Grantee meetings useful for grantee? Any topic suggestions?
- Feedback or suggestions for the state?
- Is there any way MDH can assist you to better equip your success in the Positive Alternatives Grant Program?

Summary:

Lakes Life Care Center (LLCC) has been a long time Positive Alternatives (PA) grantee beginning in 2008. Their history in the Forest Lake area is a well-developed one for a nonprofit. They began their organization in 1982 under the guidance of seven women who wanted to provide assistance to women in unplanned and crisis pregnancies.

Since their beginning in 1982, LLCC has seen the program grow to include a diverse opportunity of programs for women in need. The Center is located on a main street in Forest Lake with great visibility and ample parking for clients. The Center has good use of space and is warm and welcoming. Several of the current staff have been employed by the organization for a number of years adding much stability to their program and administration of the grant.

*Programs currently funded by the PA grant program include:
outreach, car seat education and distribution, pregnancy and parenting education and ultrasound services.*

GRANTEE MONITORING

An area of the organization's policy that was discussed included the use of background checks for all staff and volunteers that work with either clients or funds. References and referral letters are the method used for background checks for new staff or volunteers. Best practices for nonprofits suggest it should be a recommended policy to include background checks for all new staff and volunteers who do have contact with clients or money. The staff and board of directors will discuss this topic at a future date.

The current work plan for this grantee may need a minor revision. The work plan includes a car seat education program and car seat distribution. The Center is currently sending clients to a local area resource that is able to provide these services at no cost to LLCC's clients. Also it was good to note that services provided by the Center are up overall. Staff attribute this increase in clients to recent promotional activities.

Outreach activities for LLCC has been robust in the last year. The staff understand the importance of community networking and do a great job of extending their reach and contact with many partnering community organizations. Staff attend local networking meetings, are a part of the chamber of commerce, and work with churches in the area while also participating in several community events. They also network with WIC, local public health nurses, county assistance case workers and local medical clinics. In addition, LLCC also uses social media including a website, Facebook, Facebook ads and ads in local restaurants.

One program that has seen an increase in support by the community is their Dad's Program. LLCC is fortunate to have a male mentor/volunteer that has provided the needed consistency and enthusiasm for the program to prosper.

LLCC, both staff and the board of directors, is in the process of reassessing the needs of their clients and community to continue to meet the needs of their changing community. They are excited to undertake the discussion and planning that this project will require.

LLCC has responsibly undertaken the task and administration of the PA grant providing essential services and programming to women in the community experiencing unplanned or crisis pregnancies. They are timely in completing their program and invoice submissions and have attended all required grantee meetings. I look forward to partnering with this grantee for the next two years of this grant cycle.

Date: July 26, 2017

Grant Manager: Mary Ottman